

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, ICNAF, IT, XN, US

SUBJECT: US/ITALIAN INFORMAL BILATERAL FISHERIES
DISCUSSIONS

REFERENCE: ROME 16450 NOV 75

1. ITALIAN FISHING VESSELS OFF U.S. EAST COAST
GENERALLY FISH FOR SQUID WITH BOTTOM TRAWLING GEAR. ACCORD-
INGLY, THEY TAKE INCIDENTAL CATCHES OF CONTINENTAL SHELF
CREATURES, ESPECIALLY AMERICAN LOBSTER. SQUID FISHERY
MUCH MORE PRONE TO SUCH INCIDENTAL CATCHES THAN MOST OTHER
FISHERIES.

2. AS NOTED REFTTEL, AND IN AIDE MEMOIRE FROM ITALIAN
EMBASSY HERE, ITALIAN VESSELS HAVE BEEN BOARDED EXTEN-
SIVELY BY U.S. COAST GUARD TO INSPECT FOR ILLEGAL CATCHES
OF SHELF CREATURES, AND IN TWO CASES LAST YEAR ITALIAN
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VESSELS WERE ARRESTED FOR ILLEGAL RETENTION OF AMERICAN

LOBSTER. ITALIAN VESSELS HAVE NOT, REPEAT NOT, BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR THESE INSPECTIONS ANY MORE THAN OTHER FLAG VESSELS IN SQUID FISHERY SUCH AS JAPANESE AND SPANISH. VESSELS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES HAVE ALSO BEEN ARRESTED AND FINED FOR VIOLATIONS. ALL BUT ONE HAVE RECEIVED MUCH HIGHER FINES THAN THE ITALIAN VESSELS PAID.

3. NEVERTHELESS, ITALIAN OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN, ESPECIALLY OVER ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES, AND HAVE ASKED FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTER. ACCORDINGLY, IN AIDE MEMOIRE PRESENTED TO EMBOFF TODAY WE AGREED TO MEET INFORMALLY WITH ITALIAN FISHERIES OFFICIALS AT MUTUALLY AGREEABLE TIME DURING ICNAF SPECIAL MEETING IN ROME. SUCH DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO COVER NATURE AND SCOPE OF ITALIAN FISHING OPERATIONS OFF US COAST AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES UNDER BOTH ICNAF REGS AND US LAW. DEPARTMENT REPS ON US ICNAF DEL WILL ARRIVE ROME 16 AND 17 JANUARY AND EXPECT TO ARRANGE MEETING AFTER ARRIVAL. EMBASSY ROME MAY ADVISE GOI OFFICIALS AS APPROPRIATE.

4. FYI: WE WILL DEVOTE AS MUCH TIME AS NECESSARY TO FULL DISCUSSION OF MATTER WITH ITALIAN FISHERIES OFFICIALS, BUT DO NOT ANTICIPATE NEEDING TIME BEYOND COMPLETION OF ICNAF MEETING. IF NECESSARY, WE COULD REMAIN ONE EXTRA DAY TO COMPLETE TALKS. ALTHOUGH GOI HAS MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON SUBJECT, WE DO NOT WANT SUCH AN AGREEMENT AND COULD NOT SCHEDULE TIME FOR AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS IN 1976 ANYWAY. FISHERIES CALENDAR IS FULL NOW. END FYI. KISSINGER

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